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# NEIGHBORHOOD PARKING PLAN

1986-1990



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EXECUTIVE  
SUMMARY

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5-YEAR ACTION  
PLAN FOR NEIGHBORHOOD PARKING

FINAL REPORT

APRIL, 1986

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Prepared by the San Francisco  
Department of City Planning

in cooperation with  
Staff of the San Francisco  
Parking Authority

REF 388.474 F587e

5-year action plan for  
neighborhood parking :  
1986.

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## Introduction

This study on parking conditions and needs in Thirty-Two neighborhood commercial districts was conducted by the Department of City Planning at the request of Mayor Feinstein. The study focuses on districts that were previously identified as experiencing parking shortages and analyzed their parking conditions generally for the peak demand period.

The primary objectives of this study were threefold:

- o To determine in which neighborhood commercial areas of the city the parking shortages are most severe, and to establish a priority ranking of districts requiring immediate actions.
- o To determine what specific types of actions and measures, both public and private, are required to alleviate the parking shortages.
- o To estimate the costs of implementing recommended actions and measures over the next five years.

The study identifies different types of circumstances or problems which contribute to the overall parking shortages in each district. In doing so, specific actions and measures are recommended in priority order for each district to ease the predominant problems found in the most severely impacted areas. Residential areas were not included in this study.

## Methodology

For each block face within commercially-zoned areas, supply and total demand data were gathered for both on-street and off-street facilities. On-street spaces were identified by type: metered, white, yellow, green, blue and unmetered. Off-street facilities were categorized as City-owned and operated, private fee lots and garages, and private "patron-only" lots available at no charge. For both on-street and off-street facilities, "demand" is defined as the total number of vehicles observed to be parked, legally or illegally.

## Findings

On-street parking occupancy in most districts surveyed exceeds capacity, averaging about 106 percent of legal supply on Saturday afternoons. The occupancy rates range by district from a low of 73 percent to 147 percent of supply. Approximately 11 percent of total on-street parking Citywide occurs in illegal areas such as bus zones, red and white curb areas, and double parking. The percentage of illegally parked vehicles is likely to be considerably higher, because this study did not include citywide analysis of overtime parking.

In most districts, painted curb zones reduce the potential on-street supply. White passenger loading zones pre-empt the greatest number of spaces, although excessively long red curb areas, obsolete green and yellow zones also reduce legal on-street space available for the general public.





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Off-street facilities vary widely in their utilization. City-owned and operated facilities almost universally are used to capacity. Privately operated fee lots and garages average between 25 and 95 percent occupancy, depending on district, time and cost. Free "patron-only" lots are the least utilized, often less than 50 percent occupied. While facilities limited exclusively to patrons or employees were analyzed separately and not considered in the determination of priority districts for this report, they are referenced as a potential source for additional parking. As a whole, off-street facilities Citywide average 71 percent occupancy.

The study found a significant inequality in distribution of parking, both between on- and off-street facilities, and in on-street utilization within districts. On-street parking is both the most visible and inexpensive, and therefore perceived as more convenient and desirable than off-street facilities. In many instances, a high degree of illegal parking was observed on specific block faces, with available legal parking on adjacent blocks. The apparent public preference for parking close to their destination promotes "risk-taking" by parking in illegal but convenient locations.

In several districts there was found to be a significant discrepancy between the occupancy or use of on-street space and off-street facilities. Two primary factors contribute to this situation. In many of the areas, much of the off-street "supply" is restricted to patron or employee use only, and therefore not available to the general public for multiple purpose trips. In other situations, the higher priced privately owned and operated facilities often serves as a disincentive to their full utilization. Here the districts' parking "problem" is more one of pricing policy than an actual shortage of spaces. This creates a perception in some districts that parking shortages are more severe than the data suggest. Both situations appear to be a factor in the degree to which motorists circulate commercial district streets in search of on-street parking, or resort to parking illegally on the street.

Parking problems in 16 of the districts studied were found to be severe enough to warrant priority consideration for public action. Because of their proximity and shared problems, several districts were combined, resulting in a priority listing of ten districts for which comprehensive implementation strategies are recommended. The ten priority districts are listed below, in order of the magnitude and nature of parking problems found.

A. Districts With Combined On-Street and Off-Street Parking Needs:

1. Inner Clement-Mid Geary-California (4th to 7th Ave.)
2. Chinatown
3. North Beach-Broadway
4. Lombard-Union-Chestnut
5. Outer Clement
6. Upper Fillmore
7. Castro-Upper Market
8. 24th Street-Noe Valley

B. Districts With On-Street Parking Needs, But a Theoretical Surplus<sup>1</sup> of Spaces When Available Off-Street Spaces are Considered:

9. Fisherman's Wharf
10. Polk-Van Ness (Geary to Vallejo)





## Recommendations

A five-year program of specific measures is proposed for implementation. The recommended program includes strategies to increase actual numbers of parking spaces both on- and off-street, and to maximize utilization of total existing parking supply. It proposes to do so in two major ways: 1) increase the public's awareness of regulations and options, and 2) increase the convenience and supply at reasonable cost to the user. Measures to optimize legal use of on-street space, such as increasing enforcement, are also recommended.

While some measures in the recommended 5-year Action Plan are innovative, the Plan also identifies specific locations in priority districts for implementation of traditional measures to increase supply and use as provided in prior approved programs. In most districts opportunities exist to ease parking problems primarily through public actions. In certain districts private initiatives, in combination with public action, will be required to create effective programs. It is recommended that these measures be implemented through a comprehensive, staged program for each of the priority districts. It is suggested further that problem identification of this nature with accompanying steps to improve parking conditions be made a continuous city program. New districts and measures would be added to the program as conditions warrant priority action.

Increased levels of enforcement against overtime parking (including commercial vehicles) and the practice of "meter feeding" is the single most effective measure recommended to ease parking problems in all districts.

Other strategies which are appropriate for all districts include:

- o Develop and distribute educational materials designed to increase awareness of and voluntary compliance with applicable parking regulations, including time limitations and permitted uses of various painted and metered zones.
- o Provide promotional materials and better on-street signage directing motorists to off-street facilities.
- o Promote increased use of private attendant parking operations at gas stations or other off-street facilities normally closed during peak district demand periods.
- o Establish validated parking programs between merchants and existing private parking operators.
- o Convert white and excessively long red curb areas to parking, where opportunities exist.

<sup>1</sup> "Theoretical Surplus" suggests that measures recommended in this study could be implemented to induce greater use of existing off-street parking facilities, thereby offsetting observed shortages of parking in on-street situations.



The study recommends the following measures for certain districts:

- o Add metered stalls at unregulated curbside locations to increase turnover, and thereby provide more opportunities during the course of a day for each space to be occupied by many vehicles.
- o Convert parallel parking to perpendicular or angle parking, expanding actual supply where traffic circulation patterns and safety concerns permit.
- o Construct new off-street city facilities in districts identified by the Department of City Planning and the Parking Authority as having potential construction sites.

In some situations, the addition of on-street spaces or construction of new off-street parking facilities as a principal land use may not be appropriate or feasible. The degree of development intensity in many districts severely limits the availability of land necessary for new economically viable parking operations. In other areas, existing private facilities may be operating far below their capacity, even during peak demand periods. In such districts, public or private investment in the addition or construction of new spaces may not then be an appropriate response to parking problems until other measures are tested to improve use of existing facilities. In these situations, the following measures should be considered before new construction or expansion.

- o Establish shuttle bus service (free or at very low cost to the user through private subsidy) from existing major garages outside the district. For example, shuttle service could be provided between Chinatown, North Beach and the Embarcadero Center garage, the Sutter-Stockton garage, or the Golden Gateway garage. Such service would be limited to evenings and weekends, when these existing garages have a surplus of available space. Shuttles could be privately owned and operated by merchants groups and/or parking operators, or special Muni service.
- o Public-private joint ventures in the operation and/or expansion of existing private off-street facilities. Where most existing facilities are not used to full capacity especially during peak demand periods, it may be more cost effective, and appropriate from a land-use perspective to consider various means of joint ventures to increase the use of capacity of existing facilities. The cost of this approach should be weighed against the public or private sector investing in land acquisition and construction of additional facilities.
  - A. One form of joint public-private venture could be City investment in the expansion of capacity at existing private parking facilities, with a City contract for private operation, or metering the additional spaces. The Parking Task Force recommended that the City encourage and subsidize double-decking of privately owned lots in neighborhood commercial districts. Recent policies adopted by the Parking Authority will permit increased implementation of this concept.





- B. A Neighborhood Private Property Parking Program has been proposed to provide additional overnight parking for resident vehicles, on a lease basis with the Parking Authority, at privately-owned lots normally closed at night. It is recommended that the scope of this program be expanded to permit and encourage evening and/or Saturday leasing. In high-need areas where such opportunities exist, operation of these facilities could be contracted out to a private parking operator by the Parking Authority for general public use at low cost. This concept might be applied to both private facilities otherwise closed at peak demand periods, and to facilities which operate below their capacity at peak demand periods.

These recommendations are intended to supplement those which have been previously recommended by the Parking Task Force, the Department of Public Works and Supervisor Silver. Some of the measures recommended will be controversial and may not receive immediate public acceptance. However, their consideration is necessary to adequately address parking problems in certain areas.

The proposed on-street measures could create over 200 additional spaces within the 10 priority districts over the 5-year period. About 450 on-street spaces are also proposed for metering, to increase turnover and therefore obtain better use of existing resources. The cost for implementing these measures is estimated at about \$207,000.

Over 350 additional off-street parking spaces in 3 districts are approved and/or under construction by the Parking Authority. Negotiations are underway with property owners in 6 districts for 300 to 1,000 new off-street spaces. It is estimated that \$12 million to \$36 million would be needed for the Parking Authority to implement the off-street facilities recommended in the 5-year program. An additional \$2,700 in public funds is proposed for a signage program directing motorists to off-street facilities.

The total cost to the City for the recommended 5-year program is estimated at \$12,220,000 to \$36,220,000 in 1985 dollars, depending on whether the Parking Authority buys land on which to construct off-street facilities, or enters into a lease agreement with private enterprise.

The estimated cost does not include funds associated with an increased enforcement program, which could be largely funded with increased revenues from additional meters and greater compliance with meter regulations. However, approximately \$7,500 is proposed for development and distribution of educational materials related to parking regulations.

The cost of additional measures proposed in the program, for which the private sector would have primary responsibility to implement and fund, are not estimated.





TABLE A

DISTRICT	NEW PARKING SPACES CREATED BY TYPE OF PROPOSED MEASURE					
	Reallocation of colored curb areas	Convert parallel parking to angle or perpendicular	Convert existing metered stalls to compact size	Construct new lot or garage	Creation of metered stalls for greater turnover	
Inner Clement	4	22	5	yes <sup>1</sup>		
Chinatown	40			yes <sup>1</sup>		
North Beach/Broadway	13			yes <sup>1</sup>		
Marina	13		7	160		29
Outer Clement		29	2			
Upper Fillmore	2			yes <sup>1</sup>		25
Castro-Upper Market	6	26	3	yes <sup>1</sup>		25
24th Street-Noe Valley	1	8				29
Fisherman's Wharf		6				307
Polk/Van Ness	15			150		33
Total	94	91	17	310+		448

<sup>1</sup>Number of spaces for each district cannot be estimated until a site has been selected. However, a total of up to 1,000 new off-street parking spaces could be constructed in these districts.





